

Village of Howard City
Council Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2023

President Heckman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: VanWagner, Smith, Hagstrom, Heckman, MacTavish, and Bassett. Williams arrived at 7:03 pm. Absent: None.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Motion by Smith seconded by Bassett to approve the agenda as presented. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Motion by Smith seconded by Bassett to accept the consent agenda as presented. Motion CARRIED (6-0)

Public Comment: Jennifer Bitler of 255 Joy spoke regarding her son using a pellet gun in town.

Motion by VanWagner seconded by MacTavish to open the Clean Water State Revolving Fund Project Plan – Wastewater System Improvements Public Hearing at 7:04. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Public Comment: Corey Turner and Danelle Smith from Fleis and VandenBrink presented Council with the proposed SRF Project Plan. After taking into consideration key factors such as projected population and wastewater flows over the next 20 years, the Council was presented with five alternative plans to choose from with Fleis' recommendation of accepting alternative plan #4 which best suits the Village's criteria for coming into EGLE compliance with the treatment plant.

Mr. Falcon also stated that the Village is being looked at closely by EGLE. The Village has received several warning letters and had a site visit last year from EGLE in which the Village was given a reprieve; however, it was stated that the Village needs to act now to fix our system and meet the required levels.

Trustee Hagstrom inquired about the significant influent flow increase over the next 20 years. Fleis responded that these numbers are taking into account the school's input into the system and the population increase.

Dave Saucier inquired when the school would be going live; and Mr. Falcon stated they should be up and running within the next two weeks.

Motion by VanWagner seconded by MacTavish to close the public hear at 7:33 pm. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Motion by Hagstrom seconded by Smith to approve Resolution 2023-05 Adopting a Final Project Plan for Wastewater System Improvements and Designating an Authorized Project Representative. Roll Call Vote: Bassett, aye; Hagstrom, aye; MacTavish, aye; Smith, aye; VanWagner, aye; Williams, aye; Heckman, aye. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Motion by Williams seconded by MacTavish to approve Resolution 2023-3 Adopting 80% / 20% Employer/Employee Health Care Cost. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Motion by VanWagner seconded by MacTavish to approve Resolution 2023-4 Authorizing the Village of Howard City to apply for a DNR Spark Grant for Installing a Splash Pad at Ensley Park. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Motion by Hagstrom seconded by Williams to pay bills with the additions presented by the Treasurer of \$2,496.26 for a total of \$77,200.50. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Motion by Hagstrom seconded by Williams to approve Ordinance 2023-2 Amendment Chapter: 134 Bows, Firearms, and Pneumatic/Air Guns. Roll Call Vote: Bassett, nay; Hagstrom, aye; MacTavish, aye; Smith, nay; VanWagner, nay; Williams, aye; Heckman, aye. Motion CARRIED (4-3)

Motion by VanWagner seconded by Bassett to approve 2023-4 Ordinance to Amend Chapter 154 Entitled Recreational Marihuana Retailers and 2023-5 Ordinance to Enact a New Title XI, Chapter 114 Entitled Marihuana Licensing and Regulations and to Amend Title II, Chapter 31 Section 31.08 Entitled Schedule of Fines for the Howard City Code. Roll Call Vote: Bassett, aye; Hagstrom, nay; MacTavish, nay; Smith, nay; VanWagner, aye; Williams, aye; Heckman, aye. Motion CARRIED (4-3)

Mr. Falcon informed Council that after looking at the park cameras to find the individuals who vandalized the camera, he noticed many people with metal detectors. Council would like to keep an eye on this and if damage starts to occur in the park, then address the issue.

Council approved to allow Jean Toner of Jean's Pizza Café to close down Edgerton Street on July 15 from 12 pm – 7 pm for a 30 year anniversary and grand opening of the Pizza Café.

Motion by Bassett seconded by VanWagner to approve the recycle bin concrete pad bid of \$5,200.00 from Almighty Concrete Construction Inc. Motion CARRIED (7-0)

Mr. Falcon informed Council he received a request from Mary Roush to use the Farmer's Market area on May 13 & 20 for a soccer team fundraiser of selling plants. Council approved if there was no conflict on those dates.

Mr. Falcon informed Council that he received a request from Tri County School athletic director to see if the middle school girls' softball team could use the ballfields for practices and to use the fields for games on May 15. Mr. Falcon stated a schedule will be posted at the ballfields of who will be using the fields and when. Council approved the request.

Mr. Falcon also thanked everyone who attended the Planning Commission training held at Montcalm Community College.

Public Comment: Tom Parker asked for clarification as to what happens next in regard to the marihuana ordinance that was passed in regard to the permitting process. Mr. Falcon stated he would be putting together a permitting package to bring to Council for approval.

Jackie Bitler spoke regarding her grandson who was using the pellet gun.

Jennifer Bitler spoke again regarding her son with the pellet gun.

Commissioner Ron Baker stated the Commissioners are working on a number of things such as the Veteran's Office, Clerk's Office, and a basic blight ordinance.

Trustee Hagstrom inquired about police coverage as she researched and notice quite a difference in police responses from last April to this April. Council expressed concern over the lack of police coverage.

Fire Chief Heckman stated he had five students taking fire training and all five have passed the practical testing and are waiting on the written tests to see if all have passed. He also stated that during the last fire meeting, it was voted to provide uniforms for the firefighters which will cost between \$200-\$300 per person to get a shirt, new patches, flag patch, and badge. Requirements would be the firefighter must have obtained Firefighter 1 certification and sign a waiver to reimburse the Village if they were to leave the department after a specified period of time. Council agreed to go ahead with getting the uniforms.

President Heckman stated he has received several inquires regarding dead or dying trees in the Village.

Motion by MacTavish seconded by Williams to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 pm. Motion CARRIED (7-0)